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NUTRITION COMMITTEE NEWS

For exchange of information on nutrition education and school lunch activities.

May-June 1954 WASHINGTON, D. C.

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TEN POINT PROGRAM IN ACTION

Most activities of nutrition committees are concerned with one or more of the Ten Points listed in the March–April 1954 Nutrition Committee News. Many projects interrelate several Points. In this issue are described some activities by nutrition committees that show how the Points are being carried out.

Point 1. Discover better ways of communicating nutrition information and motivating people to use it.

Giving people nutrition information and getting them to put it into practice is a fundamental purpose of nutrition committees. While most of them have not conducted formal research to work out better ways of fulfilling this function, they have learned many good techniques by experience. Descriptions of these techniques have been given in NCN issues for November–December 1952, April–June 1953, and November–December 1953.

Point 2. Develop further knowledge of what to eat for best nutritional health.

Although this Point is basic to nutrition education programs, nutrition committees as such do not often engage in this kind of research, hence no examples are cited here. However, most committees arrange for reports of new findings to be given at meetings and institutes so that their programs will be in step with current knowledge.

SURVEY SHOWS WHERE DIETS NEED IMPROVEMENT

Point 3. Locate the individuals and the population groups whose diets are in need of improvement.

As a way of finding out where children's food habits need strengthening, the New Jersey Nutrition Council, working through the county superintendent of schools, the "helping teachers", and seventh grade teachers, made an eating habits survey in Hunterdon County (N. J.).

Seven hundred school children were asked to check how frequently they ate each of the types of food that go into making up a balanced diet. A report of the survey findings was sent to teachers of grades 5 through 8, and to presidents of local Parent-Teacher Associations. State and local leaders are organizing a nutrition committee in Hunterdon County to work on nutrition problems.

TRAINING IN NUTRITION

Point 4. Promote the systematic teaching of nutrition in the professional training of teachers, doctors, dentists, nurses, public health and social workers and home economists and keep their knowledge up to date through in-service and other programs.

For teachers

As part of a plan for calling teachers' attention to the importance of nutrition, the Maine Nutrition Committee asked each teacher-training institution in the State to appoint a group to develop a nutrition education program within the schools of its area. As a result—

- The University of Maine included nutrition education in a summer workshop for elementary teachers.
- The Farmington State Teachers College group studied what was already being taught, made some recommendations for improvement, and outlined a suggested nutrition course for prospective elementary teachers.
- The Gorham State Teachers College suggested giving nutrition education courses more attention in the college.
- The Washington (Me.) State Teachers College stressed more complete correlation of nutrition with other subjects and use of visual aids, poster-making, drawing up menus, experiments, songs, and dramatics to improve nutrition education in Maine schools.
- The Madawaska Training School came up with three projects: One for all age groups, including parents; one for the seventh grade in which health and nutrition are correlated with all school subjects; and a third consisting of sample units on nutrition and health developed for use in all grades.

For nurses

The Missouri Nutrition Council participated in a Food and Nutrition Institute sponsored by the Division of Health as in-service training for public health nurses. The purpose of this 3-day institute was to consider: (1) The phases of modern nutrition that may be applied by the public health nurse in giving family health service; (2) the top nutrition problems in local communities; and (3) some effective techniques for teaching nutrition to the people with whom the public health nurse works.

Workers on the staffs of agencies and associations concerned contributed talent and illustrative materials to assist the Division of Health.

Throughout the institute high interest was maintained by various techniques; question and discussion periods during and following each part of the program . . . panels . . . games . . . role playing . . . and a family case study showing nutrition problems that public health nurses meet every day. Separating into groups the 125 people attending discussed food for the aged in nursing homes, family meal planning, and school lunch.

Each participant was asked to evaluate the institute, giving the weaknesses, strong points, problems on which he expected help but did not get it, subjects that might have been omitted, comments on method of distributing materials and an exhibit of materials, and suggestions for future institutes. The nurses liked the pleasing variety in the program, the choice and use of educational methods and visual aids, opportunities for discussion of mutual problems, and the fact that the institute was geared to a study of practical problems.

TEACHING FOOD SELECTION

Point 5. Teach the "how" and "why" of food selection for good nutrition from kindergarten through college.

In a survey of nutrition teaching in schools the New Mexico Nutrition Council found that teachers gave nutrition information through visual aids, discussion, meal planning, books, experiments, drawing, and games. They taught foods and food values, menu planning, and manners through the school lunch.

The survey was made by sending questionnaires to school administrators, supervisors, and elementary teachers.

As a result of the study a course in food selection is being introduced in the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts as a part of the teacher-training program.

TEACHING WITH THE SCHOOL LUNCH

Point 6. Discover ways of making the school meal experience more educational.

In an after-school meeting arranged by the Connecticut Nutrition Council for elementary teachers and school personnel, the Area home economist of the USDA School Lunch Program showed how classroom teaching might be correlated with the school lunch program. Then the audience divided into groups according to the grade levels they were interested in for demonstrations of promising practices. A type A school meal served for supper was part of the learning experience. After supper, questions formulated in buzz sessions were answered by a panel of council members.

Exhibits to suggest classroom activities included a live chick experiment suitable for elementary grades and a balanced tray meal project for seventh grade homemaking classes. Publications and sources of additional materials were supplied by members of the council.

The session was planned to meet the needs of classroom teachers as shown on returns from questionnaires which the council had sent to every elementary school in the State before the meeting. Attending were 275 principals, teachers, school lunch personnel, school and public health nurses, college home economists, extension workers, and representatives of State agencies.

IMPROVING SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE

Point 7. Help homemakers and other food managers responsible for the food of others learn to select food wisely and to prepare it in appealing nutrient-conserving ways.

Nutrition committees take an active interest in workshops, demonstrations, and other activities to help school lunch managers and cooks serve good meals.

For example, at an Indiana Nutrition Council meeting it was reported that approximately 400 cook managers, cooks, and administrators attended summer school lunch workshops held at Purdue University, University of Indiana, Indiana State Teachers College, and Evansville College.

At the workshops displays of equipment for school lunch programs were especially helpful to cooks, trustees, and school administrators planning new lunchrooms.

At the University of Indiana three participants prepared and served a type A lunch each day assisted by nutritionists from the State Board of Health. Each meal was evaluated as to type A requirements, plan of work, food preparation, and cost of meal. Demonstrations on the uses of donated foods, and on buying and storing of fresh fruits and vegetables were presented along with discussions on sanitation, menu planning, and record keeping.

Several 1—day countywide school lunch workshops were held in different areas of the State during the school year.

REACHING PEOPLE

Point 8. Use mass media and group approaches to give better understanding of scientific nutrition to comabt food fads and nutrition misinformation, and to help overweights and underweights with their nutrition problems.

The Michigan Nutrition Council used its Nutrition Day celebration to bring to about 400 professional workers and lay persons information about world food problems, the role of soil in producing food of high nutritive value, and food fortification. But the information-giving did not stop with those attending the meeting at Michigan State College. Many represented organizations throughout the State and could report back to their groups the information they had gained. The college radio broadcast the talks, both live and tape recorded, to reach all who cared to listen. A 15—minute kinescope was made, reviewing the answers to the

questions most frequently asked in the discussion groups. This kinescope is being used by interested groups in all parts of the State and by Nutrition Committee members.

This Nutrition Day was sponsored by the Nutrition Council with the cooperation of Michigan State College. The program consisted of talks in the morning and discussion sessions in the afternoon. The discussions ran for an hour and were then repeated, enabling each person to attend two.

IMPROVING THE FOOD SUPPLY

Point 9. Be alert to opportunities to improve the nutritional value of the community's food supply.

Cornmeal

Legislation requiring enrichment of degerminated cornmeal and grits was enacted in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and North and South Carolina between 1943 and 1945 through leadership of State nutrition committees. Similar legislation for whole cornmeal is more difficult to enact and enforce in those States because much of the corn is ground in small local mills for farmers' own use and for sale locally. Many of these mills take a portion of the grain as a "toll" for grinding and some State laws do not consider such transactions as sales.

However, as a result of an active educational program, voluntary enrichment of whole cornmeal has been practiced widely. It has been facilitated by the invention of an enrichment feeder machine by the South Carolina Experiment Station for use in small mills. In 1949 South Carolina, through the efforts of the State nutrition committee, passed legislation requiring the enrichment of all cornmeal sold in the State, including that from whole corn. This law exempts toll-ground meal. Alabama included toll-ground meal in a new enrichment law which became effective in December 1953. Whole cornmeal enrichment is making progress in Georgia with the State Nutrition Council making it a major objective.

Bread and flour

As a result of State nutrition committee leadership in building support for legislation requiring enrichment of flour and bread and for its enforcement over the past 15 years, 26 States, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii now have such a law.

In New Mexico, where enrichment of flour and bread is not mandatory, the State nutrition council sponsored a bill after studying the need for and cost of such legislation. As part of its study the council asked other States for their experiences with educational campaigns to support such legislation, and secured estimates from its own State agencies and regulatory departments on probable cost and functioning of laboratory and enforcement work.

The Council patterned its bill on the uniform law that has been used in other States, with some adaptation to New Mexico needs, and had it approved by the Attorney General. At present the Council is informing groups within the State on the progress of the bill through legislative channels.

The Virgin Islands Nutrition Committee is urging the use of enriched flour and rice and legislation requiring that all flour and rice imported into the Islands be enriched.

Fruits and vegetables

The Virgin Islands Nutrition Committee is encouraging the planting of trees bearing high vitamin C fruit, pumpkins or squash rich in vitamin A, and other easily grown vegetables. The Puerto Rico Nutrition Committee has been carrying on a similar project for several years. (Dec. 1950)

Salt

The Massachusetts Nutrition Committee is stressing the use of iodized salt and the need for getting salt-free margarine on the market. Acting on the suggestion of the medical profession, the nutrition committee in 1953 arranged with a manufacturer to have salt-free margarine shipped to Massachusetts. Although not enough of this product was sold at the time to enable the manufacturer to continue to supply it, the committee believes this product is needed and is considering further work along this line.

Milk

The Nevada Nutrition Committee issued a leaflet entitled "Pasteurized Grade A Milk" giving the nutritive value of milk and importance of pasteurization. It also commended Nevada milk processors for improving the quality of milk and milk products.

To encourage use of more milk in schools, the West Virginia Nutrition Council arranged with dairy men to make sure that enough milk is available in the smaller communities to supply the schools. The council is studying the cost, advantages, and disadvantages of using bulk milk dispensers and machines vending individual cartons to see if school storage facilities for milk can be improved.

When the price of milk was increased to school lunchrooms the New Jersey Nutrition Committee protested and called the dairy industry's attention to the fact that children learn to like milk through school lunch programs and that the habit of drinking milk thus formed continues through the years.

WORKING TOGETHER

Point 10. Join forces with workers in education, health, agriculture, and the food industries to achieve an effective and integrated nutrition program.

All State nutrition committees demonstrate the kind of cooperative effort outlined in this Point through their very

purpose and organization. All activities described in this issue are the result of cooperation among workers in different fields to achieve a mutual purpose—good nutrition for the people in their communities.

A specific example is the way the Iowa Nutrition Council introduced nonfat dry milk in its State. Nutrition workers in all parts of the country have been carrying on similar educational campaigns because many people need to use the less expensive forms of milk in order to get the amount they need. Evaporated and other canned milks have long been standbys for their safety, economy, and ease of storing. A comparative newcomer on the market, nonfat dry milk needs some introduction to acquaint people with its uses and advantages.

First the Council worked with a manufacturer to make dry milk available in retail packages. When it came on the market throughout the State, each member of the council worked through his own agency to inform people about the product. This educational drive was carried out through public health and visiting nurses who passed the information on to their patients . . . through Extension home economists to families . . . through home economists who teach food preparation and nutrition . . . through home economists made available by the Iowa State College Dairy Department to demonstrate the use of dry milk . . . and through a council member on the Board of Control of State Institutions to institutional dietary departments.

Within a short time use of dry milk in Iowa increased considerably through efforts of the industry, State agencies, State college, and others, with the State nutrition council at the hub holding the activities together.

NEW MATERIALS

Listing of these materials is for the information of readers and does not necessarily mean recommendation. They may be obtained from the addresses given after the name of the publication. The symbols refer to—

GPO—Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

INF—Office of information, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

MICH—Michigan Department of Health, Old Dewitt Road, Lansing 4, Mich.

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VITAMINS: WHERE YOU GET THEM: WHY YOU NEED THEM. G–6. 1953. Folder. MICH. Single copies free.

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Prepared by Human Nutrition Research Branch of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Research Service, in consultation with the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Education and School Lunch. (The printing of this publication has been approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, July 10, 1952.)